

THE BLACKWALL BUGLE

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Issue # 21 December 2012

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A Voyage Through Time

Before Captain Henry John Rous of the Royal Navy discovered and named the Richmond River in August 1828, the Blackwall area had been occupied for over eight thousand years by the Bundjalung People who are the original custodians of northern coastal areas of New South Wales.

On Saturday 17 November this year the Wardell and District Progress Association arranged a "Voyage Through Time" on the MV Richmond Princess which sailed from Ballina Jetty at 9.30 am on a five hour return journey. Morning and afternoon tea or coffee was served and Selina organised a delicious light lunch. Passengers could buy a glass of wine to go with their meal if they chose. When the Richmond Princess docked at Wardell, most passengers stretched their legs with a walk around town.

President of the Wardell and District Progress Association, Pat Carney, welcomed everyone aboard and maintained a watching eye on their welfare, whilst Secretary of the Blackwall Historical Society, Kerry Storton, provided an interesting history of the people and events that marked the occupation and development of the lower Richmond River.

The first Europeans to settle on the Richmond were cedar cutters and their families who arrived from the Clarence on board the 'Sally' in 1842. The arrival of cedar cutters on the Richmond was preceded by their arrival on the Clarence just over a decade earlier, in 1831, led by 'escaped convict' Richard Craig. Craig was given a pardon and one hundred pounds to bring the first party of cutters to the Clarence on board the 'Prince George'. The first Richmond cutters formed a camp near the mouth of the Richmond River in 1843. They were William Lee and Tom Brandon but they were better known as 'Bill the Emigrant' and 'Tom the Emigrant' and their camp site - 'Emigrant Creek'.

Feeding the new settlers was a priority. In the early 1860s the Robertson Land Act was passed allowing small areas of land to be taken up by selectors or farmers who concentrated mainly on growing maize or sugar cane and developing small dairies. All the while, the river remained the 'highway' for commerce, transport, recreation and social communication.

This month the passengers on the Richmond Princess enjoyed the friendship of fellow travellers whilst becoming just a little closer to their ancestors.



On the left, and hosting the voyage, Pat Carney with Kerry Storton who gave an interesting account of the history of the river and the people who came to live and work in the area. Some of the passengers can be seen above.

Kim Toft - an artist who encourages and inspires youth

Kim Michelle Toft is an international artist who has held over 30 solo exhibitions around Australia and overseas. She specialises in creating hand drawn and painted original artworks on silk. She is also the author, illustrator and publisher of a series of award winning books. Kim has a 'Pop-up Gallery' on River Street, Ballina, at the front of Wigmore Arcade. Many of her artworks can be viewed at her website <http://www.kimtoft.com.au> although nothing beats a personal visit to her studio.

Kim's daughter Casey attended Empire Vale Public School, graduating in 2002. But Kim's affection for and interest in the school continues to this day. Suzie Melchior, the Secretary of the Empire Vale Public School P&C Association, says that every year-six student has the privilege of working alongside Kim to create a memorable piece of artwork as a graduation gift from the school. More recently we have extended that to the kindergarten with a



graduation gift, being a book published by Kim.

Kim has, over the years, donated a number of paintings to the P&C for fundraising to support the school. The most recently donated art work continues to attract attention. The raffle will be drawn at the end of year carols evening, on Thursday 13 December, when the year six and kindergarten students graduate.

Below, students Laila, Amanda, Abbey, Ming Xia and Victoria (who is just out of sight) apply water-based mineral dye to their pure silk 'canvases' under the watchful eye of Kim Toft. The dyes are constrained by gold gutta latex based barriers but great care needs to be taken to avoid dripping and splashing. Students have freedom to choose their colours to create their own graduation gift from school.



Pimlico News

Telephone 6683 4384

The Pimlico Ladies Charitable Organisation hoy afternoon for November was a success, with proceeds going to the Ballina Ex-Servicemen's Auxiliary. Trudy Nash, who has been the President of the Auxiliary for four years, was in attendance with eight members. They have recently purchased a Nordic Chair with pressure cushions to make life easier for those in need.

PLCO members were sorry to hear of the passing of their inaugural President, Lilian Bickmore of Tabulum at the age of 96. She had been President for 7 years before the family moved away. Condolences were offered to Ruth Galliene whose sister died following a tragic accident at Pimlico.

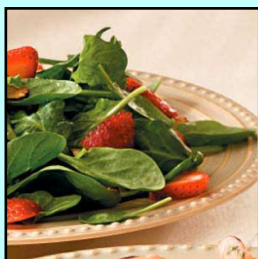
Many prizes were won during the afternoon including the main prize won by Betty Schiev of Ballina. President Glenda Skinner organised a Melbourne Cup competition, much to the enjoyment of everyone.

The final afternoon of our year will be on the 1st Monday of December commencing at 1.30 pm. The meeting will be in the form of a Christmas Party, with many prizes to be won, to thank all the loyal supporters of the PLCO. The proceeds will go to the hall to help meet the high cost of insurance and other administrative commitments.

Pimlico's wedding of the year will take place on a cane farm shortly. Ben Rippon, a handsome man in his early thirties who grew up on the farm, will marry his beautiful bride - Amy Roberts, a retired flight attendant and an English rose!

Betty Fernance.

Sue's Kitchen



Strawberry Salad

Ingredients:

16 - young spinach leaves, washed and trimmed
3 - tablespoons Balsamic Vinegar or Raspberry Vinegar
1-teaspoon honey
2 - teaspoons olive oil
Cracked black pepper
375gm baby bocconcini cheese, drained and halved
1-punnet ripe strawberries, hulled, washed and sliced.

Tear the spinach into bite-size pieces.

Place the vinegar and honey in a small bowl or cup and mix to dissolve the honey. Add the oil and black pepper and beat the mixture with a fork or small whisk. Arrange the spinach on a serving plate and top with the bocconcini cheese slices. Arrange the strawberries on top of the cheese and just before serving, drizzle the dressing over the salad. It is important to add the dressing just before you serve it; otherwise the leaves will become limp.

Options: Also add ½ cup sliced mango and/or handful of pine nuts to ingredients.

Blackwall Historical Society Inc.

% GPO Wardell, NSW 2477

ABN 75 608 492 789

blackwall_history@yahoo.com.au

Blackwall Historical Society Inc's research room is located at the Wardell & District War Memorial Hall in Richmond Street. It is open to the public on Thursdays from 1 to 3 pm, or by appointment.

The society was formed in 2005. It covers the areas of Empire Vale to Boundary Creek, Bagotville, Meerschaum Vale, Pimlico, Coolgardie and Wardell. There is a wide variety of pioneer history and oral histories of local families in our records. Come along and visit our research room! Printing and copying services are available for anyone wishing to share their family's history with the society. New members and volunteers are most welcome. The next General Meeting of the society will be held on Thursday 6 December, at 7pm in the Diggers Room at the hall. The Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 7 February 2013.

For all enquiries please telephone:-

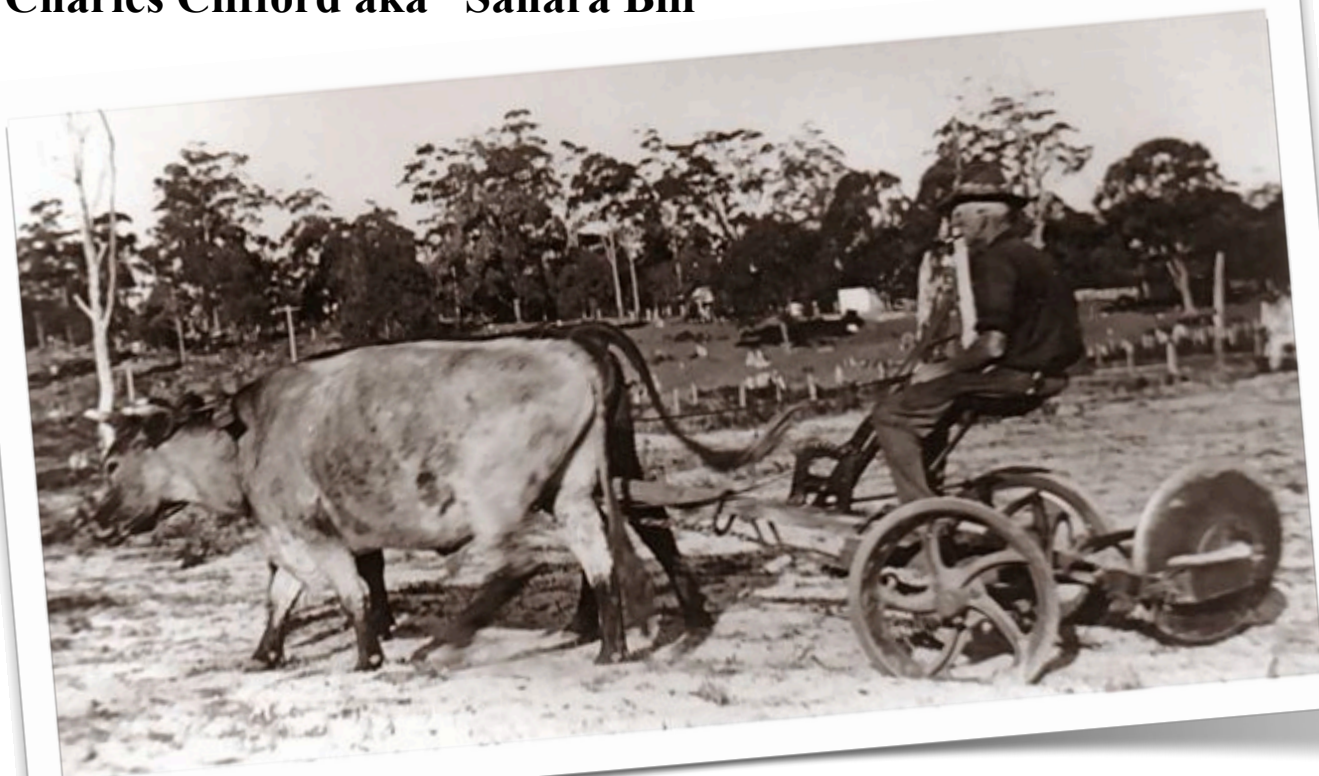
Barbara on 66 879 573 or Lorraine on 66 834 358

Wardell & District Progress Association Inc.

The next General Meeting will be held on Thursday 20 December 2012 at 7pm in the Wardell and District War Memorial Hall.

Update on Council's works programme for Wardell in 2013. All residents of the district are cordially invited to attend. For further information please telephone President Pat Carney 66 834360

Barry Clifford talks about William Charles Clifford aka “Sahara Bill”



“This is a photo of William Clifford taken about 1939 – two years after I was born. He was known as “Sahara Bill”. He was ploughing. He had grown sugar cane on his farm, but in 1934 his cane caught fire and burnt two weeks after the Mill had closed at the end of the season. He lost all his cane in the fire and turned to dairy farming. But he only had about 30 milking cows. There was no crop insurance in those days and he didn’t have the capital to get more.

“He worked a bullock team of 16 bullocks hauling timber from Blackwall Mountain. I still remember him bringing lots of stuff from the Eggins farm, where Bill had a share farm, on bullock drays.

It was a pleasure to watch how he handled the bullocks. Just past Chinamans Lane there is a track leading to the holding yard where the bullocks would be formed into teams, or stood down. The leading bullock would take his place and the other 15 bullocks would form up behind him – each in his own place, standing next to his yolk. Bill would then just put the yolks on. When the bullocks were released, they grazed and roamed all over Blackwall Mountain, which was Yaki Monti’s farm. One of the bullocks wore a bell around its neck (I still have the bell) so we had no real trouble finding them and getting them down to the holding yard.

“Eventually Bill walked off the farm. The Bank took it. I had just got married and was negotiating with the Bank but Des Aitkins bought it.”
Barry Clifford

St Patrick’s Church



On 23 December, at 5.30 pm, Sunday Mass will be celebrated.

Christmas Mass will be celebrated on Christmas Eve - Monday 24 December at 5.30 pm.

All are welcome!

Sister Larelle.



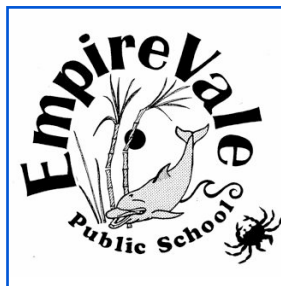
EDWIN WILSON



The celebrated poet and author Edwin Wilson, who was born in 1942 and spent his childhood in East Wardell, recently returned to visit old friends, to present a reading of his "New Collected Poems" in Lismore, to be interviewed by ABC Radio and to plant a couple of trees in celebration of life.

Go to Edwin Wilson's personal website for some of his history, art, poetry and books.

<http://www.edwinwilson.com.au/>



Empire Vale Public School Celebrating Our Success

Carol Evening

Empire Vale Primary School will host its annual Christmas Carol evening on the 13th of December, starting at 6pm. Our P&C will have a fundraising BBQ and will have plenty of raffle prizes up for grabs. This is a great night for the community to come together to celebrate the festive season. We hope to see you there!

When it comes to a debate-Jason is great! ▶

It's affirmative! Jason has reached the highest level of Primary School debating, where he will argue against the State's elite debaters in Sydney. Jason's spectacular success in debating started whilst participating in classroom debates through to being selected to join a team of four North Coast students to take on the State. We wish Jason all the best with his great State debate, however we know that when it comes to getting his point across - he is one persuasive pupil!



Empire Vale Primary students recently enjoyed Bike Week, where they got to 'hit the track' to learn more about road safety, whilst having a whole lot of fun! They were provided with plenty of opportunities to improve on their riding skills. We all had a great time on our bikes - pushing and peddling all day long!

Show Success!



Congratulations to all of our students who entered their creative work into this year's North Coast National Show. Our Empire Vale students once again did us proud, as they showcased their many skills and talents by entering paintings, pictures, poems, posters and packet cakes!

Our student winners were:-

Junior Photography-	Bindi H.	2nd Place
	Ming Xia B.	Highly Commended.
◀ Tursa Art Prize-	Jessica H.	2nd Place.
Bundjalung Art Prize-	Laila S.	2nd Place.
Junior Baked Cake-	Carley T.	2nd Place.

Bonita Avery, Principal.

WIRES to the Rescue

Earlier this month, two kilometres south of Wardell, a north bound car left the Pacific Highway, crashed through some mangroves and became totally submerged within the Richmond River. The two women occupants were reportedly rescued by two witnesses before being transferred to hospital - one by ambulance and the other by rescue helicopter.

Wardell Brigade of The Rural Fire Service was one of the emergency units to respond to the incident. The crew attended first to the priorities of evacuating the casualties and securing the safety of the site. Only then did volunteer firefighter Michael Heugh find there had been some collateral damage in the shape of an injured young water dragon!

Michael, who turns out regularly for Australian Seabird Rescue, promptly handed the injured reptile over to fellow firefighter Kylie



Trueman for she is also a volunteer for WIRES - the Australian Wild Life Rescue. Kylie treated the little creature with respect and tenderness. But it had a broken spine and euthanasia was the only course available. No helicopter ride for a water dragon, but another interesting day for firefighter Kylie.



Wardell Sporting & Recreation Club Ltd

Telephone 6683 4437

The last couple of months have been exciting for the club. The Golf Club Championships were held over the 4th and 11th of November. The rounds were played and the champion has been decided, however the winner will remain a mystery to everyone – bar the captain – until the 15th of December when the Golf Club Christmas party will be held (this is for golf club members).

We held the AGM on the 4th of November. The following were elected to nominated positions: Tony Mitchell – President; Fran Mitchell – Treasurer; Kenny Threlfo – Vice President. The following were elected to the Board of Directors: Kerry Storton, Vic Foster, Amos Kingdom, Dion Barnes, Warren Barnes, Russell Clifford and Paul McLean. Thank you to all who attended the AGM and to all people who support the club by attending the different functions we have,

especially to those who volunteer their time and expertise in many ways.

This year the club will hold New Year's Eve celebrations. There will be fireworks going off about 8:30-9:00 pm, so even the children can be awed by the colour and noise. A BBQ tea will be available, with facilities for the adults to relax and enjoy the evening. All members of the community – and any visitors that are around – are welcome.

Remember the club is open weekday evenings from about 3:00pm; Sunday mornings for golf competitions – and any daylight time for social games and practice. Friday evenings are for a meal and entertainment. We are also available for hire by telephoning 6683 4437.

Kerry Storton

Phill's Philosophy.

Home is where the heart is! Pliny the Elder

Wardell Service Station
for all your fuel, newspapers, take-away
foods and convenience store items.

Cooking until 7.00 pm

Phillip and Ann Read.

Telephone 6683 4252



Pratten Blaze, winner of The Rural Stakes at The Tweed River Jockey Club on 31 March 1981. Rider B. Watkins. Pratten Blaze had 8 wins for Lester, starting with the Lismore Maiden Handicap in 1976. He was the sire of Sir Pratten which also won 8 races for Lester. Lester also bred the mare Miss Ryefield which won 5 races and came 2nd 14 times and 3rd 14 times.



Lester Lovett's Horses.

I've been around horses all my life.. My first competitive race was the boys under twelve. I rode from Meerschaum Vale to enter the race at Alstonville. I came third. There was a storm brewing during my ride home and I had to move pretty fast. When I got home, I raced to the front verandah and had just got off the horse and the bloody roof blew off the house and flew straight over the horse without touching it.

I went to a bridle meeting 76 years ago at Dungarubba and I won the race. Then I entered picnic races all over the place. At the House with no Steps I won three races in one day with the same horse – an ex race horse named 'Playboy'. I had a truck in those days and at one time I used to carry all the horses from Ballina to the Gold Coast, Brisbane and Coffs Harbour. I used to buy horses for three people in Sydney. I would consign the horses to Sydney by train. They were knackery horses. I would sometimes send seventy

or eighty horses at a time by train. This was at the time when motor vehicles became popular and horses were no longer wanted by most people.

I bought some race horses and I bred some. I had twenty-five winners at registered races and a lot of place getters. Pratten Blaze was a registered race horse of mine. I bought him as a colt at Inverell in '73 and he won his first race in '76. He won 8 races and I bred from him. One of his offspring was Sir Pratten which won 8 races for me. I sold him and he went to Melbourne where he won again including 3 steeplechase races. I watched his first race in Melbourne on Skye Channel. It was a thirty-three hundred metre race and he won everywhere except the last stride. He came second. That's horses for you! I've been with horses all my life.

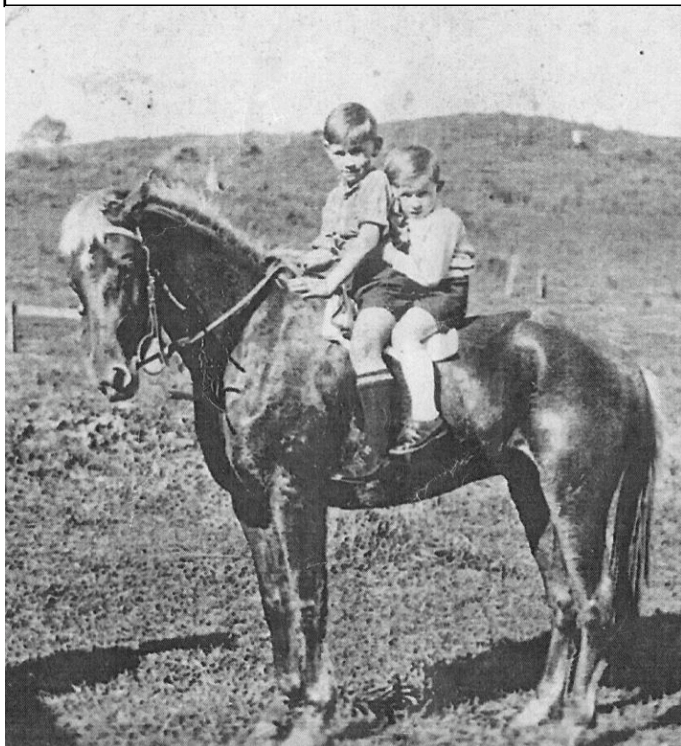
I was the owner and breeder but I always took in partners with my race horses to spread the load of costs. You had to have two or three with you to make it pay. I only did it for sport because there was no

money in it then. In those days the prize money was probably two thousand but it cost you three thousand to get to the starting line. Today the prize money is better – probably ten times the amount – but costs have gone up too.

I trained all my horses at Ballina and used the stables of George Reeves and Billy Foley. They were good times. I had my first winner, Pratten Blaze, in 1976 and my last one in 2000 by a mare I had bred and raised myself - Ryefield Girl.

Racing took me to a lot of places and I met a lot of people. They were good days but it was a hobby and not a business. I rarely bet on horses so I didn't lose too much money backing them. The costs of owning, training, feeding, transporting and caring for horses are quite considerable. But horses are in my blood and I still own and ride stock horses all the time when working my cattle. I wouldn't be without them.

Main story Page 8



On the morning of Tuesday 6 November Lester Lovett came to see the 'Bugle' bringing the attached photo of himself with his first horse.

He was asked which horse would win the Melbourne Cup that afternoon. Without hesitation he said, "Lloyd Williams' Green Moon." It won!



**Australian
Red Cross**

**Branch President
Ruth Partridge 6628 5751
Meetings
1st Wednesday of the month
Wardell Memorial Hall
9.30 a.m.
New members always welcome.**

The Wardell Red Cross thanks you for your support in 2012 and wishes everyone the very best for Christmas and the New Year. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 6 February 2013.

Jane Sproule. Publicity Officer and Secretary.

On my first pony in 1929 with my younger brother Dudley.

Cane, Cows and Horses.

A life on the land.

Lester Lovett

speaks with Mike Rushby

"On 19 February 1923, I was born Lester Joseph Lovett the son of William Claude Hamilton Lovett and his wife Cathleen Nugent. They were dairy farmers here in Meerschaum Vale.

"My father was an auctioneer and a dairy farmer in many other places like his father before him - Thomas George Lovett. So farming is in my blood. I started school at Georgica before moving to Meerschaum Vale in November 1930. Then about 1933 we moved to Bagotville and I joined the Bagotville School with the Gahans, McElligotts, Montis, Chapmans, Cliffords and Duncans.

"I had to travel to the Wardell School to get special lessons so that I could be confirmed and accept communion. Three of us would ride the one horse to Wardell. That's where I met my future wife. She was a great girl. We almost had 50 years together but she died 18 years ago. I still have the table that my Mother-in-Law made for us in 1945 on which to have our wedding breakfast.

"Eighty-four years ago my father had a butchers shop between St Patrick's Church and Maylee House, where the highway now runs. Wardell was a much busier place then with more shops. There was Meaney's, Bartlett's, Axford's the tin smith, and Rudgley's had a service station opposite the pub. The Baker's Shop baked bread and delivered it around the district. The pub was always busy with cane cutters.

"I left school at the age of fourteen, and worked for a dairyman milking a hundred cows and getting five shillings a week (50c) and my keep. I would milk the cows, fix the fences, run the horses and clean the dairy. When I turned 16 my wages went up to seven and six a week (75c). The next year I got my driving licence and derricked cane for a few years at Purdys Lane and Lower Moylans. I tried my hand at cattle dealing and sold my first cattle on the 1st of June 1937. My father had the family Sales Yards in Wardell next to the dip yard where the Bridge Street pumping station now is.

"I've got a book that records my first cattle sale. For one cow I got £1.9.6

(\$2.95) and that was a good price. I had bought the cow from Warren Lumley's father. He was milking one day when I called on my horse. I asked if he had any cattle for sale. That was the start of my cattle dealing. When I first started buying and selling cattle you wouldn't pay for the cattle you bought until you sold them. People trusted you. I bought a lot of cattle off farmers as they moved into sugar cane and I sold them through the Meerschaum Vale sales yards.

I used to deliver meat to every house between Wardell and South Ballina. If, when I called on a house, the owner had a couple of cows for sale, I would make him an offer, then, once a fortnight I would round them up and sell them. After the sale, everyone would head for the pub. I was too young to go into the pub. I was sitting on the step one day and the barmaid came out to me and said, "Go round to Mr Meaney's and get me an ice-cream and I'll give you a beer!" So I went and got the ice-cream!

"When World War II started I volunteered for service but, due to a serious injury to my knee, I was not acceptable. So I drove a truck for the building of the aerodrome at Evans Head. I would drive to Woodburn and load my truck with turf, then drive to Evans Head and lay the turf on the aerodrome. One day the butcher, PV Walsh, rode his pony down the road and said to me, "I've got a man sick and I'm short of staff - will you go up there and help them?" They used to deliver meat then and he knew that I knew where everybody lived. I went up there on a Monday morning and every evening for a week he would ask me, "Did you like it all right? Come back tomorrow then!" I ended up working for him for 23 years. He was a good boss. In the end I was going out buying all his cattle. I used to buy them and carry them, slaughter them, butcher them and deliver the meat.

"PV Walsh would buy cattle in Lismore and walk them with a lead cow to Wardell, then on to the punt to be ferried



over to his butchery. I know the punt at Bagotville sank when the cattle all ran to one end, but I never heard of similar problems at Wardell. I've swum cattle off the three islands here - Cameron's Island (Pimlico Island) Cabbage Tree Island and Goat Island. We'd swim them off one at a time behind a row boat with a halter on them. They were pretty wild!

In 1970 I bought thirty head on Goat Island. I made a yard on the island and a crush into the water. To do that I had to haul all the timber over to the island with a rowing boat. Then I swum the cattle off, one at a time. We had a mishap with one bull that got away on this side of the island. He went straight across Cabbage Tree Island and over the bridge into the heath on the Western side of the river. I couldn't find him. A mate of mine lived at Bagotville. He heard something in the bush one day. The bull still had a rope on him which had snagged around a tree. He had big horns. We worked out how to get him. My mate had a bulldozer. We took the bulldozer out, chucked another rope over the bull's horns and tied him to the bulldozer and pushed the tree out with the bulldozer. We then led the bull with the dozer to a paddock where I had parked my truck. Then we loaded the bull onto the truck and I took him to Lismore Sales Yards and sold him.

"I leased this farm at Meerschaum Vale for many years. Then in 1980 I sold my cane farm at East Wardell to Olivia Newton John so I could buy this farm. I've had a good life. I never had sad times when my wife was alive. I used to breed and train working dogs and I've been around horses all my life and have owned and raced thoroughbreds all over the place. I have always believed that a day's work is never done until the job has been completed.

:continued Page7

The Blackwall Bugle is produced by a voluntary community working group. Ballina Shire Council takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the content and acts only as copy editor and printing agent.